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ART. I.—*Memoirs of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, Bart.* Edited by his Son, CHARLES BUXTON, Esq., B. A. Second Edition. London: John Murray, 1849. 8vo. pp. 614.

WE resume our sketch of Mr. Buxton's labors and character as a philanthropist with some account of his efforts for the abolition of slavery and for the final suppression of the slave trade in the British dominions, showing how he conducted that cause which Mr. Wilberforce had formally committed to his care in 1821.

The history of the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807, shows that that measure was not a solitary and unconnected act, not the work of a temporary faction, not done inconsiderately or under a passing impulse; but that it was the legitimate result of a long succession of contests obstinately fought and victories gallantly won, the results of which had made the nation free, powerful, and Protestant. The great political questions involved in the dispute as to the rightful succession to the throne having been virtually set at rest about the middle of the last century, and the preponderance of the House of Commons in the British Constitution being established, the minds of men were turned towards those improvements in the social condition of the people which were so much needed. Then began that revival of religious feeling, which the fervor and activity of Wesley and Whitfield spread through the whole body of the nation, which aroused the

Established Church, created the Evangelical party, and, aided by the advance of education and general intelligence, built up a public opinion to which the abolitionists could appeal for reform. Then Granville Sharp, Clarkson, Stephen, Macaulay, and Wilberforce accomplished what many before them, as pure and high in purpose as they, had considered, despair'd of, and abandoned.

No record would be more full of interest than one which should fully set forth the motives by which these men were impelled, the allies by whom they were assisted, and the various fortunes through which they waged that war which ended in their great victory. We know of no contest in which the principles of good and evil appear in forms more simple and severe, or in which the defenders of the right were impelled by purer motives. For the early abolitionists arose "because of the oppression of the needy, and because of the deep sighing of the poor." They appealed to humanity in behalf of mankind; and by their discretion no less than by their zeal, by self-command as much as by inflexible adherence to the principles of justice, they proved themselves worthy to plead such a cause before such a tribunal. They gained their cause; and by abolishing the British slave trade, they accomplished a work whose importance we cannot estimate; for they pledged the most powerful nation of Christendom,—that nation which has most influence over the civilized world, and most power over the barbarous—the great Colonizer, which sends the living advocates of its home-bred principles to flourish and grow strong in every quarter of the world,—they pledged this nation and its descendants to maintain, wherever their power extends, the principles of freedom. They left their successors a long and arduous task to perform; but they left them their example. Let us see how those upon whom the duty of fulfilling this pledge first devolved acquitted themselves of their task.

Sixteen years had now passed since the abolition of the British slave trade. But the interval had not been one of repose for those who had triumphed in that long contest. The voice of warning mingled with the first cry of congratulation:—"You have crossed the Red Sea, indeed," wrote Dr. Burgh to Wilberforce, "but Pharaoh may follow your steps, and aim at some abridgment of the deliverance; keep then

prepared to craze his chariot wheels, and disappoint every effort of men who have not only opposed you, but mingled their opposition with predictions of what other nations may do; and even with threats of repeal at home." To maintain this constant guard, the African Institution was founded, on the first anniversary of the day in which the abolition bill had received the royal assent. The leaders of the party were untiring in their efforts to secure the faithful and efficient execution of the law which prohibited the slave trade to British subjects, and never ceased urging their own government to use the whole weight of its influence to induce foreign powers to join with them in suppressing the traffic.

But this constant attention to the subject could not but bring these men to perceive how highly desirable it was, not only that the trade in slaves should be stopped, but that the state of slavery itself should cease to exist. They considered, too, that there were no obstacles to its abolition in the British Colonies, either of a prudential or of a constitutional nature, which, by a wise and just course of legislation, the British Parliament could not overcome. Having arrived at this conclusion, the next step was to devise the best possible plan of parliamentary operations.

Accordingly, at Mr. Wilberforce's invitation, Mr. Macaulay and Mr. Buxton repaired to Marden Park (where Mr. W. then resided) early in January, 1823. "Long and deep," we are told, "were their deliberations, how best to shape those measures, which were to change the structure of society throughout the Western World." Early in the following March was published Mr. Wilberforce's *Manifesto* "on the present state of the negro slaves in the British Colonies, calling all good men to concur in endeavoring to improve their condition, in order to fit them for the enjoyment of liberty."

Whether those who exerted themselves for the abolition of the trade distinctly contemplated, at the time of their efforts for that purpose, the future abolition of slavery as the final result of their endeavors, may be a matter of doubt. In an able article in the Edinburgh Review for 1804, in favor of the abolition of the trade, it is said, "the advocates for the abolition of the slave trade most cordially reprobate all idea of *emancipating* the slaves that are already in our plantations. Such a scheme, indeed, is sufficiently answered by the story

of the galley slaves in *Don Quixote*, and, we are persuaded, never had any place in the minds of those enlightened and judicious persons who have contended for the abolition with so much meritorious perseverance." * But in 1823, when the outworks had been carried, and the attack was now warm upon the citadel itself, the same journal holds different language. " Nothing, surely, can be more untrue than the assertion, that emancipation was never heard of till the abolition was obtained; or that they who supported the one disavowed any views of attempting the other." " The fullest avowal of their ultimate views was made by those wise and humane individuals, and the most distinct notice of their intentions, when they treated as absurd the notion of perpetual bondage." † Thus it appears that a Review may review its own opinions as well as those of other people, and that, too, with some asperity. But any apparent inconsistency is explained by the probable supposition that the latter article was written by Lord Brougham. ‡

On the 19th of March, Mr. Wilberforce presented to the House of Commons a petition from the Quakers, " who, having been the first to protest against the slave trade, now led the way in the attack on slavery;" and Mr. Buxton gave notice that, on the 15th of May, he would submit a motion, " that the House should take into consideration the state of slavery in the British Colonies."

Outside the walls, too, operations were commenced. The Anti-Slavery Society was now formed, and measures taken to excite the popular feeling, and to procure an expression of the sentiment of the nation.

At the appointed time, Mr. Buxton offered the motion of which he had given notice; and it is worthy of note, that, in his opening speech, he declared distinctly, that while he looked forward to the extinction of slavery, he did not advocate sudden, but gradual, emancipation. To the resolutions which Mr. Buxton introduced, Mr. Canning, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, offered certain amendments, which were

* *Ed. Review.* iv. p. 477.

† *Ib. xxxix.* p. 126.

‡ See *Life of Wilberforce*, Vol. v. p. 167. " I have had two long talks with Brougham, and have gradually opened to him our feelings and views. He offered voluntarily to write an article on slavery for the very next Edinburgh Review."

Wilberforce's Diary for 1823.

carried ; and in accordance with them, thus amended, circular letters were addressed by the Government to the various colonial authorities, recommending them to adopt certain measures which had no tendency toward emancipation, but were only calculated to improve the condition of the slaves. But these recommendations, temperate and just as they were, were received by the colonists with the most vehement indignation. "They could find no language sufficiently bitter to express their rancor ; the colonial legislatures unanimously refused submission to the recommendations of the government." Acts of violence occurred. In Demerara, a futile insurrection of the negroes brought down the merciless vengeance of their masters. A missionary, named Smith, apprehended on charge of exciting revolt, was tried by a court martial of militia officers, and condemned to be hung ; but he died in prison. The news of this ferment among the colonies produced the greatest consternation in England. The leaders of the abolition party were overwhelmed with reproaches. Those who had joined them for the popularity of the cause were now loudest in the outcry. Government drew back. The principles and measures which Mr. Canning had advocated the year before were now restricted to the most meagre limits ; and the pledge, that if the Colonies refused to accept the recommendations of Government they should be forced to obey its commands, which he had given "in favor of a whole archipelago, was reduced to a single island."

Mr. Buxton did not hesitate to upbraid the minister for his vacillating conduct. He read over the resolutions of the previous year, and showed how wide apart are the pledges of '23 and the acts of '24. "Compensation to the planter, emancipation to the negro — these are my desires, this is the consummation, the just and glorious consummation, on which my hopes are planted, and to which, as long as I live, my most strenuous efforts shall be directed."

On the 1st of June, the case of the missionary Smith was brought forward by Mr. Brougham, and, in a speech of four hours length, treated in a manner which made a strong impression upon public feeling. He was followed by Sir James Mackintosh ; after whom spoke Dr. Lushington, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Denman. Their efforts were not without success. They put the conduct of the colonists

in its true light before the nation, and changed the current of public feeling. Government, indeed, remained impassive ; and as Mr. Canning had positively declared that another year of trial should be given the colonial governments, before the mother country took the task of amelioration into its own hands, nothing remained for the anti-slavery party but to wait till that interval had elapsed.

But Mr. Buxton did not allow the time to slip away without yielding its results. Forced to let the West Indian question rest for the present, his mind turned upon a new, though kindred, subject. The island of Mauritius, lying about ten degrees west of Madagascar, had been ceded to England by France in 1810, three years after the abolition of the British slave trade. But it appeared that, partly owing to this very circumstance, and partly to the facilities afforded by the neighborhood of the African coast, the importation of slaves to the island had continued uninterrupted except during one or two brief intervals. A gentleman by the name of Byam, who had been Commissary-General of the police at the Mauritius, and General Hall, who had for a short time been Governor of the island, gave Mr. Buxton the first information upon the subject. He obtained from them a large mass of documents, which he studied long and carefully. The result was a conviction that their statements were true. He was appalled by the magnitude of the evil. Distant, almost inaccessible, it was a foe not easily grappled with ? But could he sit still under the knowledge of such abuses ? A year's leisure was before him, and, with his friend Dr. Lushington, he undertook the task of reform.

“ On the 9th of May, 1826, Mr. Buxton brought the Mauritius question before parliament. In the commencement of his speech, he reminded the House that the traffic in slaves was by law a felony. ‘ And yet,’ he continued, ‘ I stand here to assert, that in a British colony for the last fourteen years, except during General Hall’s brief administration, the slave trade in all its horrors has existed ; that it has been carried on to the extent of thousands, and tens of thousands ; that, except upon one or two occasions, which I will advert to, there has been a regular, systematic, and increasing importation of slaves.’

He then proceeded to prove this statement, adducing the evidence of one admiral and four naval captains, one general and three military officers, five high civil officers, and two out of the

three governors of the island ; and then, from calculations which he had very fully and accurately made, he proved every one of the eight distinct heads of accusation which he had brought forward. By a return of the number of black population in the Seychelles, he showed that there was only one alternative, either the slave trade had been carried on, or every female in that group of islands must have been the mother of one hundred and eighty children.” pp. 193–4.

A select committee was appointed to inquire into the subject ; but Parliament being dissolved soon after, its investigations were brought to a close. The rest of the year 1826 was spent by Mr. Buxton in collecting evidence bearing upon the points he wished to establish ; and in this labor he was much assisted by the zeal and diligence of Mr. George Stephen and Mr. Byam.

Early in 1827, Mr. Buxton moved that a committee of inquiry be again appointed ; but at the request of Government, his motion was deferred till the 26th of May. Meanwhile, Sir Robert Farquhar, the late Governor of Mauritius, complained to the House of Commons of the charges of maladministration brought against him in Mr. Buxton’s speech of the last session, and dared him to the proof. During the week preceding the day appointed for the motion, his attention was wholly devoted to the contemplated case. But the anxiety which it involved, joined with the cares and fatigues which had long been wearing upon him, now seriously affected his health. Still the business was too important to be checked by slight obstacles, and his overstrained powers were urged to the task.

“ He spent the Saturday in taking a general view of the evidence which had been collected, of the atrocious cruelties practised upon the negroes, both in their importation, and afterwards, when they were reduced to slavery. In the course of that unhappy morning, he was so completely overwhelmed with anguish and indignation at the horrors on which he had been dwelling, that he several times left his papers and paced rapidly up and down the lawn, entirely overcome by his feelings, and exclaiming aloud, ‘ Oh, it’s too bad, it’s too bad ! I can’t bear it.’ ”

The result was thus forcibly described by himself, some months afterwards.

“ Last spring, the whole force of my mind, and all my faculties, were engaged in preparing for the Mauritius question. I

had pledged myself to prove that the slave trade had existed and flourished in that colony ; that the state of slavery there was pre-eminently cruel, and that persons of eminence there had tolerated these enormities. It is, I think, but justice to myself to admit, that the object was a worthy one ; that I had embraced it from a sense of duty ; that my mind was imbued with deep affliction and indignation at the wrongs to which the negro was exposed. I spared no pains, and no sacrifices, in order to do justice to my cause ; and the anxiety and labor which I endured preyed upon my health. About the middle of May, I went to Upton, in order to improve it by change of air ; but I was then under the pressure of disease, and my physician described my state by saying, ‘you are on fire, though you are not in a blaze.’ I concealed from others, I did not even admit to myself, the extent of my indisposition. I could not doubt that I felt ill, but I was willing to suppose that these were nervous feelings, the effects of fatigue of mind, and that they would vanish, as they had often done before, when the exertion was at an end.

“ On Saturday, May 19th, I took a survey of the case of cruelty to the negroes, and for two or three hours I was distressed beyond measure, and as much exasperated as distressed, by that scene of cruelty and horrid oppression. I never in my life was so much moved by any thing, and I was so exhausted by the excitement, that I could not that day renew my exertions. The next morning I awoke feeling very unwell. My wife and family went to a place of worship, and my daughter remained with me. I think, but I have not any clear recollections, that I told her about 12 o'clock to send for Dr. Farre. I have a vague idea of my wife's return, but beyond that, all is lost to me. The fact was, that I was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and it was not till the following Wednesday that I showed any symptoms of recovery.”
pp. 199, 200.

On recovering consciousness, his first words were, that he must hurry to the House to bring forward his motion on the Mauritius ; nor would he be assured that the appointed time had passed until the proceedings of the House on that evening were read to him from the newspaper report. It was more than a year before he gained sufficient strength to attend to his ordinary duties, nor did he ever fully recover from this frightful attack.

Toward the close of the session of 1829, Sir Robert Farquhar referred to the charges of which he had formerly complained, and demanded that they should either be proved or retracted.

“ Mr. Buxton explained the reason why the matter had been

dropped, and read the opinion of his physician, that he could not attend to public business in Parliament without danger to his life. But he pledged himself, if alive in the next session, to accept the challenge of the honorable Baronet. However, in the course of the summer the commissioners returned, and their report rendered any further exertion unnecessary. In spite of the great difficulties by which they had been surrounded, (for the inhabitants had banded themselves together in a sort of conspiracy, to prevent any evidence from being laid before them,) they had established the fact of the Mauritius slave trade, and to a great degree ascertained its extent ; and they clearly proved that this trade had continued in full vigor, except during the administration of General Hall." pp. 232-3.

So far as the controversy related to Sir R. Farquhar, it was terminated by the sudden death of that gentleman early in 1830 ; and in the spring of that year, Government declared that they were convinced by the report of their commissioners, " that slave trading to a vast extent had prevailed at the Mauritius ;" and that all the statements of Mr. Buxton had been well founded. At the same time, they announced that they were ready to adopt immediate measures for the suppression of the trade, and for the liberation of those slaves who had been illegally imported. And thus the labors of Mr. Buxton and his friends were crowned with complete success.

Meanwhile, the question of West India emancipation had assumed a new aspect. The year of probation granted by Mr. Canning to the colonial governments expired in 1827 ; but the colonies had not availed themselves of this opportunity of reform, and nothing, in fact, had been done towards ameliorating the condition of the slaves.

" Of the eight bills recommended for their adoption by Mr. Canning, *not one* had been accepted by any colony, except Nevis. But the Government were not yet discouraged ; they were still anxious to persuade, rather than to compel."

" Accordingly, in 1828, Sir George Murray, as a last experiment, despatched circular letters to all the colonial Assemblies, once more urging them, in strong terms, to effect for themselves the required improvement in the condition of their slaves. These circular letters were, like the former, entirely disregarded." p. 210.

Thus, in 1830, though the abolition party had made but little stir, they had made great progress. Since attention had been attracted to West Indian slavery, seven years before, the

crisis which was now at hand had been slowly approaching, and this, not through the exertions of the abolitionists, but by the action of the planters themselves. A few years before, the idea of emancipation had been odious both to Parliament and to the people. "If," said Mr. Buxton in 1827, "a man had a large share of reputation, he would lose the greater part of it by espousing the cause of the slaves ; if he had a moderate share, he would lose all ; and that is my case." But the planters had meanwhile been the able and most efficient allies of those whom they considered their bitterest enemies. By their invincible obstinacy, they had chilled the sympathy with which many had been disposed to regard them. They had aroused some feelings of anger by the defiance and contempt with which they had hurled back the quiet suggestions of the Government ; and the severity with which they had punished the rebel negroes had shocked every feeling of humanity. The whole religious public was excited. "They had condemned Smith to the gallows, and thus turned the Independents against them ; they forced Shrewsbury to fly for his life, and the Wesleyans were aroused ; the Baptist chapels were razed to the ground, and the Baptists became their enemies." They had charged the abolitionists with hypocrisy and falsehood, and the abolitionists in reply had laid bare the facts of their system. The planters had maintained their right to uphold a wrong. They had exposed to the people of Great Britain the enormous evils of slavery, and had convinced them that a gradual reform of those evils was impossible. The result was, that all minds now inclined toward immediate emancipation.

Looking, as we now do, upon the unprosperous condition of the principal islands of the British West Indies, many persons are led to doubt the wisdom of those who brought about the emancipation of the slaves. It is said, that crime is more prevalent among the free blacks than it was among the slaves ; that the arts of civilized life are disappearing from the community ; that the quantity of sugar, coffee, and "the nobler spices" now raised upon the islands is much less than when "black Peter and black Paul" were stimulated to the production of them by the use of the "beneficent whip ;" and, in short, that the freed blacks are behind the slaves in the performance of those duties which they owe to themselves, their

neighbors, and the world at large. Emancipation, it is affirmed, has added to the evils of the world, instead of diminishing them.

Whether these allegations are well founded, and whether this is the time when the final result of so great a social change may be fairly determined, we will not now ask. But before we condemn the emancipation party for errors revealed to us by the strong light of experience—and by the “*Latter-day Pamphlets*,”—we must prove that they were mistaken as to two important facts, which they maintained as the principal grounds of their determination:—First, that the amelioration of slavery had been fairly and patiently attempted without a particle of success. “It was not,” said Mr. Stanley, when Colonial Secretary, in his speech of the 14th of May, 1833, “it was not till all means had been exhausted; till every suggestion had been made; till every warning had been given; and had not only been given in vain, but had been met by the colonial legislatures with the most determined opposition; that England took the work of reconstructing West Indian society into her own hands.” And, secondly, that under the system of slavery, *as it then and there existed*, the slaves were gradually dying off. “The appalling fact was never denied, that at the time of the abolition of the slave trade, in 1807, the number of slaves in the West Indies was 800,000; in 1830, it was but 700,000; that is, in twenty-three years, it had diminished by 100,000. (p. 273.) Let those who lament the falling off in the exports of these islands consequent upon emancipation, estimate the deficit which would have occurred from the slow murder of the slaves. Consider the present condition of the free blacks as degraded as we may, still it cannot be maintained that they were better off under the awful cruelties which this fact of diminishing population establishes. And the abolitionists knew either that this state of slavery must continue, or that the slaves must be made free; for the planters had driven them off from the whole middle ground. And they took their course accordingly.

“In May, 1830, a crowded meeting assembled in Freemason’s Hall, with Mr. Wilberforce in the chair. The first resolution, moved by Mr. Buxton, expressed that ‘no proper or practicable means should be left unattempted for effecting at the earliest

period the entire abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions.' It was seconded by Lord Milton (now Earl Fitzwilliam,) who had throughout supported the cause with all the weight of his station and character, though by so doing he had placed himself in opposition to the administration of which his father was a member. Other speeches and resolutions followed in the same strain, till at length Mr. Pownall rose to declare in a few vigorous words that temporizing measures ought at once to be abandoned. 'The time,' said he, 'is now come when we should speak out, and speak boldly, our determination—that slavery shall exist *no longer*.' These words embodied the feeling which already pervaded the anti-slavery party, and from this time immediate emancipation became its avowed object." pp. 260, 261.

But Government was not yet prepared to take decisive measures, and the efforts of the abolition party were now directed towards forcing it to adopt the course which they thought the true one.

" During the session of 1830, nothing of moment was effected, except that, on the 13th of July, Mr. Brougham obtained a large minority in favor of ultimate abolition. On the 20th of the same month, three days before Parliament was prorogued, Mr. Buxton, in his place in the House, made an earnest appeal to the electors throughout the kingdom, repeating the statement made by Canning in 1823, that 'the first step towards emancipation should be the abolition of the practice of flogging females.' He showed that even this first step had not yet been taken ; a decision having recently been made by a large majority in the Jamaica House of Assembly, that females should continue to be flogged indecently ; and he proved in detail that each of the other abuses, which in 1823 it had been proposed to mitigate, still existed in the colonies unchecked and unaltered." p. 262.

Meanwhile the question of parliamentary reform was deeply agitating the nation. The ministry of the Duke of Wellington was broken up, and succeeded by that of Earl Grey. In the interval between the sessions of 1830–31, Mr. Buxton labored diligently in collecting proofs of the decrease of the slave population, and, having completed his researches, brought them to the notice of the House of Commons in a speech delivered on the 15th of April, 1831. The effect of this speech upon public opinion was, in fact, decisive. At its conclusion, Mr. O'Connell, who had ever been a steady and strong advocate of the cause, came across the House, and said, "Buxton, I see land." If the position then taken could

be maintained, success was certain. The opposite party made every effort in their power to dislodge their opponents; but the conclusions at which Mr. Buxton had arrived were deduced from the returns of registration "*sworn to by the planters themselves,*" and were impregnable. Parliament was soon after dissolved, but early in the next session, it appeared that Government, too, was moved, for Lord Howick, Under Secretary for the Colonies, referring to the ineffectual remonstrances which his three predecessors in office had addressed to the Colonies, declared that "the time had arrived when the language of exhortation should cease." The West India party now prayed Parliament that a committee of inquiry might be granted them, feeling assured that the information collected by it would "relieve their fellow colonists and themselves from the obloquy under which they now labor." Mr. Buxton saw in this committee "a pretext for delay and nothing else," but the committee was granted, and he himself was examined by it. "He gladly availed himself of the opportunity of communicating some of his abundant information, and laid before it twenty-seven documents, prepared with extreme care." Although the report of the committee was indecisive, the effect of its investigations, says Mr. Charles Buxton, "was to diffuse more knowledge and sounder principles."

As we have seen, Mr. Buxton was prepared to urge "immediate emancipation;" the Government, on the other hand, liberal though it was, still wished to postpone this step till "a progressive improvement should have been made in the character of the slave population, by the temperate enforcement of ameliorating measures." They repeated their recommendations to the Colonies, indeed, with increased earnestness; but like all who have office and wish to keep it, they were loth to assume the responsibility of so important a measure, and unwilling to offend a body whose parliamentary strength was so great as that of the West Indian interest. Heartily attached as Mr. Buxton was to Whig principles, and warm as was his personal regard for many members of the Cabinet, it was with the greatest reluctance that he assumed a position at variance with theirs. The maintenance of this Ministry, too, was almost vital to the success of his cause; but profoundly versed as he was in the state of the West Indies, nothing seemed to him so pernicious as hesitation and delay.

Not only did such a course imply the continuance of the state of things which a declining population denoted, and the reiteration of remonstrances and recommendations now nine years old, but it was fraught with danger to the whole population of the islands. The slaves were not ignorant of these discussions of their fate. They were restless, and suspicious lest their masters should withhold from them the freedom already granted by the mother country. The danger of insurrection increased with the delay of action. "The gun is cocked and at the shoulder," said Mr. Buxton ; and he dared not postpone a motion for immediate emancipation. Here, then, he came to issue with the Government. He proposed to move for a committee "to consider and report upon the best means of abolishing the state of slavery throughout the British dominions, with a due regard to the safety of all parties concerned." The Government first endeavored to persuade him to postpone this motion ; and, failing in that, begged him to add the words, "conformably to the resolutions of 1823." To this he could not accede, but persisted both in offering his original resolution, and in dividing the House upon it. It was a characteristic step, and one of great importance ; and the following extracts from a letter written by his eldest daughter to his family give a vivid account of all that occurred.

" The debate has at length actually taken place, and great cause have we to be satisfied with the result, now that we are safe on the other side of it. It is difficult exactly to recall the feelings and opinions of the preceding days ; it was, however, the usual course,—every possible assault from friend and foe to make my father put off his motion, and when that was found hopeless, to induce him to soften it down, or not to divide the House. Dr. Lushington was of opinion that it would endanger the cause to persevere, and difference of opinion with him is worse than any thing to my father. The Government were also most pressing, and the terms they offered extremely tempting. On Tuesday morning my father and Dr. Lushington were a long time with Lord Althorp and Lord Howick, both of whom used every argument and almost every entreaty. I believe he did not reply much at the time, but was cruelly beset, and acutely alive to the pain of refusing them, and, as they said, of embarrassing all their measures, and giving their enemies a handle at this tottering moment. They said, besides, that the public were so occupied with Reform, that it was only wasting the strength of the cause ; nobody

would listen, and the effect would be wholly lost, whereas if he would wait a little, they would all go with him ; their hearts were in fact with him, and all would be smooth, if he would have a little reason and patience. On his return he related all this to us, and proposed writing a letter to Lord Althorp previous to the final interview, which was to take place the next day.” pp. 298, 299.

“ Thursday morning, May 24th, came. My father and I went out on horseback directly after breakfast, and a memorable ride we had. He began by saying that he had stood so far, but that *divide he could not*. He said I could not conceive the pain of it, that almost numberless ties and interests were concerned, that his friends would be driven to vote against him, and thus their seats would be endangered. But then his mind turned to the sufferings of the missionaries and of the slaves, and he said after all he must weigh *the real* amount of suffering, and not think only of that which came under his sight ; and that if he were in the West Indies, he should feel that the advocate in England ought to go straight on, and despise those considerations. In short, by degrees, his mind was made up. When we got near the House every minute we met somebody or other, who just hastily rode up to us. ‘ Come on to-night ? ’ ‘ Yes.’ — ‘ Positively ? ’ ‘ Positively ; ’ and with a blank countenance, the inquirer turned his horse’s head, and rode away. I do not know how many times this occurred. In St. James’s Park we met Mr. Spring Rice, whom he told, to my great satisfaction, that he positively *would* divide. Next Sir Augustus Dalrymple came up to us, and after the usual queries, said, ‘ Well, I tell you frankly I mean to make an attack upon you to-night.’ ‘ On what point ? ’ ‘ You said, some time ago, that the planters were opposed to religious instruction.’ ‘ I did, and will maintain it.’ We came home and dined at three.” p. 300.

They go down to the House, and the ladies find places in the ventilator. Mr. Buxton offers his motion, speaks upon it, and is followed by Mr. Macaulay and Lord Howick.

“ Lord Althorp proposed the amendment of adding ‘ conformably to the resolutions of 1823.’ Then came the trial. They (privately) besought my father to give way, and not to press them to a division. ‘ They hated,’ they said, ‘ dividing against him, when their hearts were all for him ; it was merely a nominal difference, why should he split hairs ? he was sure to be beaten, where was the use of bringing them all into difficulty, and making them vote against him ? ’ He told us that he thought he had a hundred applications of this kind, in the course of the evening ; in

short, nearly every friend he had in the House came to him, and by all considerations of reason and friendship, besought him to give way. Mr. Evans was almost the only person who took the other side. I watched my father with indescribable anxiety, seeing the members, one after the other, come and sit down by him, and judging but too well from their gestures, what their errand was. One of them went to him four times, and at last sent up a note to him with these words, ‘immovable as ever?’ To my Uncle Hoare, who was under the gallery, they went repeatedly, but with no success, for he would only send him a message to persevere. My uncle described to me one gentleman, not a member, who was near him, under the gallery, as having been in a high agitation all the evening, exclaiming, ‘Oh, he won’t stand! Oh, he’ll yield! I’d give a hundred pounds, I’d give a thousand pounds, to have him divide! Noble! noble! What a noble fellow he is!’ according to the various changes in the aspect of things. Among others, Mr. H—— came across to try his eloquence: ‘Now don’t be so obstinate; just put in this one word, ‘interest;’ it makes no real difference, and then all will be easy. You will only alienate the Government. Now,’ said he, ‘I’ll just tell Lord Althorp you have consented.’ My father replied, ‘I don’t think I exaggerate when I say, I would rather your head were off and mine too; I am sure I had rather yours were!’ What a trial it was. He said afterwards he could compare it to nothing but a continual tooth-drawing the whole evening. At length he rose to reply, and very touchingly alluded to the effort he had to make, but said, he was bound in conscience to do it, and he *would* divide the House. Accordingly, the question was put. The Speaker said, ‘I think the noes have it.’ Never shall I forget the tone in which his solitary voice replied, ‘No, Sir.’ ‘The noes must go forth,’ said the Speaker, and all the House appeared to troop out. Those within were counted, and amounted to ninety. This was a minority far beyond our expectations, and from fifty upwards, my heart beat higher at every number.” pp. 301, 302.

“On Friday, Dr. Lushington came here and cheered him, saying, ‘well, that minority was a great victory;’ and this does seem to be the case.”

A few months afterwards, Mr. Buxton writes his daughter, “I saw T. B. Macaulay yesterday; he told me one thing, which has much occupied my mind ever since, and which furnished the subject-matter of my meditations as I rode by the light of the stars to Upton last night. He said, ‘you know how entirely every body disapproved of your course in

your motion, and thought you very wrong, very hard-hearted, and very headstrong ; but two or three days after the debate, Lord Althorp said to me, ‘ *That division of Buxton’s has settled the slavery question.* If he can get ninety to vote with him when he is wrong, and when most of those really interested in the subject vote against him, he can command a majority when he is right. *The question is settled* ; the Government see it, and they will take it up. So reported Macaulay ; and he added, ‘ Sir James Graham told me yesterday, that the Government meet in a week ; they will then divide themselves into committees on the three or four leading questions, for the purpose of settling them. Slavery is one.’ ”

In pursuance of Mr. Buxton’s motion as amended by Lord Althorp, a committee was appointed of which Sir James Graham was chairman. It prosecuted its investigations from June till August, and the evidence given before it was published at the same time with that taken before the committee of the House of Lords, which had been asked for by the West Indians. “ The general impression,” says Mr. Charles Buxton, “ was that they had established two points : — First, that slavery was an evil for which there was no remedy but extirpation ; secondly, that its extirpation would be *safe*.”

The Reform Bill was passed, Parliament was dissolved, and in 1833 a new and reformed House of Commons met.

“ It was generally understood that Earl Grey’s government was about to undertake the settlement of the question, and Mr. Buxton went down to the House of Lords, on the 5th of February, in full expectation of hearing from the King’s speech, that one of the great measures of the session was to be the emancipation of the slaves. Great was his disappointment, when the speech closed without any allusion whatever to the subject. He hastened back to the House of Commons, and, immediately on the Speaker’s return, gave notice of a motion on the 19th of March for the abolition of slavery. A few minutes afterwards, one of his friends hurried up to him, and said, ‘ I have just been with Brougham and Goderich, and they conjure you to do nothing hastily ; you will wreck the cause if you do.’ ‘ What ? not give notice of a motion ?’ said he. ‘ O, no ! by no means,’ was the reply ; ‘ you will knock the whole thing over.’ ‘ But it’s done !’ said Mr. Buxton. This prompt proceeding had an immediate effect on the ministers.” pp. 312, 313.

Vexed and alarmed as he had been at the entire silence of
2 *

the King's speech upon the subject nearest his heart, he was relieved and delighted when, in consequence of his prompt action, Government declared that they would "undertake the question, and introduce a safe and satisfactory measure." "This delights me," he writes, "and now I scorn those critics who maintain that the children of Ham ought to be flogged by all good Christians." The weeks passed on, but still Government named no day for a motion; no plan was officially announced, and rumors got abroad that the whole Administration were by no means prepared to adopt the vigorous measures which some of its members proposed. Mr. Buxton knew from long experience the weight of the West India party in the national councils; he knew, too, that the questions of Finance, India, and the Church, were to be disposed of this session; he could not, therefore, but feel somewhat alarmed when, notwithstanding Lord Althorp's promise, so long a time was suffered to elapse without the appearance of any measure at all. This anxiety weighed heavily upon him. "He is much depressed," says one of the family letters, "because the ministers do not name a day; he does not know whether or not to execute his threat of bringing his motion forward next Tuesday: for this he is almost unprepared; and besides, they promise so well that it seems doubtful whether it would be right to go to war with them. He sleeps badly, and is very anxious."

"His whole heart and soul, in fact, were given up to the work, and the depth and intensity of his feelings were visible in all his deportment; he looked pale and care-worn, and his tall figure began to show signs of stooping. He spoke little, and was continually engrossed in thought. His demeanor could not be more exactly portrayed, than by Spenser's lines: —

' But little joy had he to talk of aught,
Or aught to hear that mote delightful be;
His mind was sole possessed of one thought
That gave none other place.' "

p. 317.

The 19th of March, the day named for his motion, came on, and he rose to propose it.

"Lord Althorp requested him to postpone it to a future time; but he replied that he was compelled to resist the request, except upon two conditions: first, that the Government would prepare a plan for the complete and immediate abolition of slavery; and

secondly, that they would fix a day for introducing that measure to the House.

‘I see clearly,’ he said, ‘what will be the fate of this great question, if I postpone it without some definite assurance that it will be brought before the consideration of the House. It will be postponed for the session — and then, there is much reason to fear, it will be settled elsewhere in the most disastrous manner. Therefore, however obstinate I may appear, and however painful it may be to me to resist the request, before made to me in private, and now in public by the noble Lord, I am compelled to proceed at once with the motion, unless His Majesty’s Government can fix a day on which they will be prepared to explain their plans with respect to colonial slavery.’

“Lord Althorp, upon this, named the 23d of April, and then my father formally told the Government that he gave up the question into their own hands, upon the security of the declaration made to him that the proposed measure was to be safe and satisfactory.

“The fears by which he had been harassed lest the ministers should allow the session to pass away without bringing any measure forward, were now at an end. The day for the motion was fixed, and when this long desired step was taken, he sank for a while into a feeling of profound repose. He was able to sleep at night, and began to resume his cheerfulness of manner. He thought, that, as the Government had been prevented from delaying the question, the grand point was gained ; and that it only remained for him and his friends to await the unfolding of their measure. ‘I have no more to do with slavery now than any other gentleman,’ was an expression frequently on his lips during that interval of rest.” pp. 319, 320.

But he was not yet to be freed from his anxieties. A change took place in the colonial department of the Cabinet, by which Lord Howick, upon whose concurrence of opinion he thoroughly relied, was succeeded by Mr. Shaw Le Fevre, while Mr. Stanley was made Secretary of the Colonies. It appeared that the Cabinet had refused to concur in Lord Howick’s plan for immediate emancipation, and were inclined to make the negroes buy out their own freedom. This seemed to Mr. Buxton a measure neither safe nor satisfactory, because it was dilatory and unjust. He consulted with the leaders of the abolition party as to what should be done in this new turn of affairs. “Their opinion as to the course they should pursue was unanimous. The higher powers were clearly about to fail them ; the nation was firmly on their side ; why not, then,

place the matter in the nation's hands?" In short, it was determined that the matter should be brought before the whole country, that the engines of moral suasion should be immediately applied to the people, and the pressure of public opinion let on to the ministers. The whole machinery of agitation was quickly set in motion; numberless pamphlets were sent out, innumerable petitions were sent in; lecturers spread abroad to every corner of the kingdom, and delegates from every town in the land assembled together. Those who stood by caught the enthusiasm. Newspapers and periodicals, the clergy and dissenting ministers, urged upon their readers and their flocks the sinfulness of slavery and the righteousness of emancipation.

The leaders of the party were fully aware that it was more easy to excite a popular feeling like this, than to direct it; and for their own sakes and the truth's, they would not have availed themselves of this rude force, could they have influenced the ministry in any other way. Mr. Buxton found reason to think that "people's principles were the greatest nuisance in life;" and he experienced the difficulty of guiding a public opinion composed of few ideas and many prejudices; "but on the whole, a sufficient degree of unanimity was obtained."

Owing to the change in the Cabinet, the motion of the Government was postponed from the 23d of April to the 14th of May, and on that evening Mr. Stanley opened the debate. "He had been Colonial Secretary little more than a month, yet he showed that, vast as the subject was, he had, in that short time, completely mastered its details, had become conversant with all its dangers and difficulties, and was prepared to settle it forever." The main features of the plan proposed were apprenticeship for the negro and compensation to the planter. To these Mr. Buxton agreed, and confined his efforts to effect some modifications in the practical details of the plan. But that numerous and zealous body of abolitionists which had been brought into action, had been imbued with only one idea,—emancipation; and to them it appeared that any variation from the naked simplicity of that idea was a departure from their true end and aim. Apprenticeship and compensation seemed to them adulterations of the truth and to be abhorred. The party divided, one portion adhering to

their old leaders, and the other rushing forward under the lead of such as would keep in advance of them. To a vote of censure passed upon him by a committee of this division he replied as follows :—

“ Our cause, I trust and believe, is essentially prospering. Patience and confidence perhaps we cannot expect from lookers-on ; but we are not therefore absolved from our duty to God and the negro race to act according to the best of our judgments and consciences ; and this, I can safely affirm, I, at least, have done. My character is of very little consequence. Indeed, had I not long ago learnt that I must sacrifice that, as well as almost all else, to this cause, I should, between my foes and my friends, have led a very unhappy life. But I have learnt, that severe as is the task of incurring the displeasure of those I esteem my duty frequently calls for it ; and I acknowledge myself amenable to no human tribunal in this cause. . . . Pray believe that I write in perfect good humor ; but it is necessary I should be independent, and independent I will be, or how can I give an account of my stewardship ? ” p. 338.

When Mr. Stanley’s bill was brought before the committee of the whole House, the important debate occurred. Mr. Buxton proposed to reduce the term of apprenticeship from twelve years to one year, and lost his amendment only by a majority of seven. The next night, Mr. Stanley consented, in deference to the wishes of the House, to reduce the period of apprenticeship to seven years. An apprenticeship for this term of years, and a grant of £20,000,000 to the planters, were the main features of the bill which passed the House of Commons on the 7th of August, 1833, and received the royal assent on the 28th of the same month. The planters afterwards agreed to surrender the apprenticeship on the 1st of August, 1838.

But the joy of the abolitionists at their success was tempered by a grief in which all parties joined. As the bill was passing through its last stages in the House of Commons, their first and most beloved leader, Wilberforce, expired. He died, thanking God that he should have lived to witness the day in which England was willing to give twenty millions sterling for the abolition of slavery. He died as he had lived, full of joy from the abundance of his gratitude.

Since the days of the Great Commoner, we think no man has exerted so strong an influence upon the source of British

history, upon the national character, as William Wilberforce. Since the final establishment of liberty in that kingdom, which we should not date earlier than the settlement of the law of libel in 1792, the great moral progress made by the nation owns him as its leader. He brought mercy and righteousness into the land prepared for them by justice and freedom. Without rank, without power and without party, he derived all his strength from himself and from his cause. If the secret of his success be sought, it is found in this, that he, more than any man whose history we know, appreciated the value of the highest Christian virtues as means of success in the affairs of business and of the world. It was by the faithful study of himself, by keeping his "own heart diligently," that he acquired his rare knowledge of men, and his delicate tact in dealing with them. It was because his sympathy was unbounded and intense that his influence was so wide and strong. His policy was unerring, because his objects were high above the mists and currents of selfishness. He was wise by obedience to that law which "maketh wise the simple." The eminence which he gained in virtue was surpassing; yet we do not know that it was more extraordinary than the unwearied efforts which he used to attain it. He succeeded in bringing into every-day life that holy spirituality which we imagine to be attainable only by the saintly self-denial of the recluse. "I begin to think," said Mr. Buxton, "that of all men Wilberforce is the most subjected, and controlled, and invariably in the right frame of mind." And yet so constant was the development of his powers, so certain and invariable the high progress of his nature, that, as one who marks the movement of the stars in their course of light, foretells from the past their future orbit and position, so the Baron de Staël saw in the onward march of his heaven-directed life and powers one of the strongest proofs of a future and a happy existence to be found apart from revelation. He is the great exemplar to be followed by all future philanthropists. Probably few men have ever enjoyed more happiness in this world than he; for his pleasures were culled from the right hand of wisdom, and the pure current of his life ever ran, like the brook Siloam, "fast by the oracles of God."

It is not our purpose to treat in detail the various subjects which occupied Mr. Buxton's attention during the three

remaining years of his parliamentary life. "The spring and summer of 1834 were spent chiefly in active exertions for the benefit of those so soon to be liberated, watching the regulations adopted in the different islands; carefully investigating the appointment of the stipendary magistrates, and especially endeavoring to provide for the education and religious instruction of the negroes." To this important subject he called the attention of the Colonial Secretary, and used every effort to turn the operations of various benevolent societies in this direction. The British Foreign and Bible Society promised a New Testament and Psalter to every negro who should be found able to read on the Christmas day after emancipation. Among other projects was one to obtain possession of Lady Mico's fund. A certain Lady Mico, who had died a century and a quarter before, left a sum of money to her daughter upon one condition, that she should not marry a specified individual. As was very natural, the young lady's attention being so forcibly directed towards a prohibited party, and some of the baser interests of her nature being arrayed against some of its finer feelings, she did marry the man to whom she and the penalty were attached, and in obedience to the provisions of her mother's will, the money was devoted to the redemption of white slaves from Barbary. But, as there were now no white slaves in Barbary to be redeemed, the fund had accumulated till, in 1827, it amounted to £110,000. "After much trouble and expense, this money was obtained, and invested in the names of Dr. Lushington, Mr. Buxton, and two other trustees, to be employed in the education of the negroes;" while Government added a temporary grant of £20,000 per annum for the same purpose. "The proper and most efficient application of this money occupied much of Mr. Buxton's time and attention."

The 1st of August, the day on which the emancipation of the slaves was to take place, drew near. It was very generally observed in England as a day of rejoicing; but to many it was a day of intense anxiety, which was only relieved by the receipt of news from the Colonies, bearing unvarying testimony to the admirable conduct of the negroes on the day of freedom.

"Throughout the Colonies, the churches and chapels had been thrown open, and the slaves had crowded into them, on the evening of the 31st of July.

"As the hour of midnight approached, they fell on their knees, and awaited the solemn moment, all hushed in silent prayer. When twelve sounded from the chapel bells, they sprang upon their feet, and throughout every island rang the glad sound of thanksgiving to the Father of all; for the chains were broken, and the slaves were free."

We find, in Sir R. R. Schomburgk's recently published History of the Island of Barbados, a letter written by Mr. Buxton, not included in this volume of Memoirs of him by his son, which illustrates so pleasingly his candor, magnanimity, and strict regard for truth, even in relation to a cause about which his feelings were painfully excited, and which seems too often to kindle in its other advocates that fiery zeal in which their reputation for temperance, veracity, and kindness of speech is wholly consumed, that we cannot resist the temptation to quote it entire. It appears that Mr. Buxton, deceived by information which seemed at the time to be perfectly trustworthy, had brought a public accusation, expressed in very severe language, against the planters of Barbados generally, and against the Solicitor-General of that island in particular, "for aiding and abetting in forcing the apprenticeship of free children without the consent of their parents."

"Against this unjust aspersion, the legislative Houses remonstrated, and the Solicitor-General, Mr. (now Sir) R. Bowcher Clarke, addressed himself individually to Mr. Buxton in order to remove this unfounded accusation, so prejudicial to his character. The following letter, in which the late Sir Thomas Buxton retracted the erroneous statement, and of which he sent a copy to Lord Glenelg, is worded in terms so honorable to the writer that I gladly insert it:—

"London, June 26th, 1837.

"Sir,

"I have received your letter of _____. In the first place allow me to express my sense of the delicate and kind manner in which you conveyed your complaint of the statement I had made to Lord Glenelg, and to thank you for your charity in ascribing to unintentional error those observations of mine, which under your feeling of unmerited obloquy might have been imputed to another cause, and might have been called by harsher names. I have no hesitation in saying at once, that I was betrayed into a great error, and that I was the means of inflicting an injury upon you which you did not merit. My only apology is, that I derived my information from an informant whom I know

to be incapable of wilful misrepresentation, that I copied verbatim his statement, and requested that an inquiry might be instituted.

" Since the receipt of your letter, and the perusal of his Excellency the Governor's despatch, I have communicated with my informant. He has called my attention to the fact that he spoke of your intentions early in December, and that your public proceedings did not take place until the following January. This relieves him from the imputation of stating that which the smallest inquiry would have proved to be without foundation, but it makes no other difference. Your intentions in December must be judged by your acts in the following months. I therefore altogether withdraw my charge, and request your pardon for having made it.

" I take the liberty of adding, for the sake of my own character, that in a controversy which has now lasted fourteen years, this is the first occasion on which I have found it necessary to retract any thing I have asserted, and that in this case I stated no more and no less than I received from a very respectable, and, in other instances, a very accurate informant. I have sent a copy of this letter to Lord Glenelg, and I trust it will prove satisfactory to his Excellency the Governor, as well as to yourself.

" I have, &c.,

(Signed) " T. FOWELL BUXTON."

He was much occupied at this time, too, by inquiries into the treatment and condition of the aboriginal inhabitants of the British Colonies ; and, in July, 1834, moved an address to the King upon this subject, calling particular attention to the *commando* system of Southern Africa. The address was passed unanimously, and the next session he obtained a committee of inquiry into the origin and conduct of the Caffre war. Meanwhile, Lord Glenelg, Secretary for the Colonies, became convinced that the tract of territory taken from the Caffres had been seized unjustly ; and he therefore determined that it should be restored. The troops in occupation were accordingly marched back again to the British territory, and protectors of the aborigines were placed in every Colony where the British came in contact with them. The committee on the condition of the aborigines, together with one appointed to inquire into the workings of the apprenticeship system in the West Indies, occupied Mr. Buxton's time very fully, until the dissolution of Parliament in the summer of 1837 ; when, standing again for Weymouth, which he had represented for nearly twenty years, he lost his election.

His defeat appears to have been occasioned, not by any diminution of personal attachment to him on the part of his constituents, but by the increasing local influence of the Tory party, and by the unscrupulous means they used to carry the borough. He was well content with the result. Proposals were made to him from twenty-seven different places to stand as candidate, but he declined them all. "I mean for conscience' sake," he wrote, "to ride, shoot, amuse myself, and grow fat and flourishing." How thoroughly he devoted himself to his new object may be inferred from his writing his son in November. "I have been calculating that, since Parliament closed, I have ridden 500 miles and walked 1500."

We pass hastily over the period between the passage of the Emancipation Act and Mr. Buxton's withdrawal from Parliament, that we may dwell the longer upon the last, the most arduous, and, to us, the most interesting, labor of his life. Released from parliamentary duties, he had hoped for a period of repose; but looking up from his work, he saw fields white for the harvest where laborers were few. He spent but a moment in the shade, and grasping again the sickle labor-bright, he struck into the new field.

"I well remember," writes one of his sons, "the commencement of that long train of toils, anxieties, and sorrows. While my father and I were staying at Earlham, in the beginning of the summer of 1837, he walked into my room one morning, at an early hour, and sitting down on my bedside, told me that he had been lying awake all night, reflecting on the subject of the slave trade, and that he believed he had hit upon the true remedy for that portentous evil."

The idea that now struck him so forcibly, was this, — that "though strong external measures ought still to be resorted to, the deliverance of Africa was to be affected by *calling out her own resources.*"

The idea having occurred to him, it was not allowed to fade slowly away, nor to lie unproductive of action; but as soon as possible he set himself to following out this train of thought to its farthest limits. He was compelled to defer this undertaking, till he reached home in the fall of the year, when he applied himself earnestly to the task. Throughout the winter, he revolved the subject in his mind,

read every book relating to it upon which he could lay his hands ; and while he occupied himself in elaborate calculations respecting the extent of the slave trade, he sat at work a score of auxiliaries to collect proofs of the fertility and commercial resources of Africa. " Andrew Johnston and I," he writes, " are working like dragons at the slave trade. I only wish that the number of the hours in each day were doubled, and the number of minutes in every hour quadrupled." Having thus prepared his statistics, he went to London in the spring for the purpose of verifying them by naval and mercantile evidence of the highest authority.

" This done, he laid an epitome of his plans before different members of the Cabinet ; by several of whom a disposition was evinced to investigate the matter further, and he was requested to prepare his plans in a more developed form by the beginning of the recess. Accordingly, at the end of May he went to Leamington, where he was joined by Mr. Scoble, an able and hearty fellow-laborer ; and by Mr. McQueen, who was intimately acquainted with the geography and productions of Africa, and who had some years before declared his conviction, that the true way to abolish the slave trade would be to supplant it by lawful commerce. Aided by these gentlemen, he devoted himself sedulously to the task, frequently working at it about twelve hours a day." p. 446.

Of this " Letter to Lord Melbourne," but twenty copies were printed for the use of members of the Government, and by the middle of August, it was in their hands. Early in September, Lord Glenelg, Colonial Secretary, sent for him for an hour's conversation. " The Government, says Lord Glenelg, are deeply interested by my book. Melbourne writes to him strongly about it. The Cabinet meet on Friday on the subject. Glenelg says they accede to all I have said, as to previous failures. In short, he was convinced to my heart's content. I have since seen Lushington ; he is delighted with the book ; accedes to it with all his heart." The Government examined his plans, acceded to them, and requested him to enlarge and publish his " Letter to Lord Melbourne," for the purpose of informing and arousing the public mind. He did so, and produced a work in two pamphlet volumes, called " The Slave Trade and its Remedy."

In this work, he first treats of the extent of the slave trade and the sacrifice of life which it occasions. His first

proposition is, "that upwards of 150,000 human beings are (1839) annually conveyed from Africa across the Atlantic, and sold as slaves ;" which he substantiates by the best official authority, and corroborates by calculations and estimates drawn from the most trustworthy sources of information. His calculations are long and careful, and his conclusions always put considerably below the total sum at which he fairly arrives. He then considers the mortality involved in this shipment, in the seizure, march to the sea-shore, detention there, during the passage, and in the seasoning after landing on the American shore. From all these causes combined, he estimates the mortality at 145 per cent. ; that is, if 150,000 slaves are annually imported into Cuba and Brazil, 225,000 have perished to furnish them, and, of those landed, 30,000 die within the year.

"It is impossible," he says, "for any one to reach this result without suspecting, as well as hoping, that it must be an exaggeration ; and yet there are those who think this is too low an estimate. I have not, however, assumed any fact without giving the data on which it rests ; neither have I extracted from those data any immoderate inference. I think that the reader, on going over the calculation, will perceive that I have, in almost every instance, abated the deduction, (inference,) which might with justice have been made."

But this enormous traffic is carried on in spite of the efforts of the British cruisers and the stipulations of foreign powers. And why ? The traders, indeed, are excited by the enormous profits of the trade ; but they could do nothing, were they not assisted by the Africans themselves. "The African has acquired a taste for the productions of the civilized world. They have become essential to him. To say that the African, under present circumstances, shall not deal in man, is to say that he shall long in vain for his accustomed gratifications." "We want three things," said an African chief; "powder, ball, and brandy ; and we have three things to sell,—men, women, and children." Thus, both parties are eager for meeting and exchange, and the slender barrier of a line of cruisers must needs be overleaped. But turn one party from the barter, convince the African that he can obtain the supplies he needs more surely and abundantly by some other means than the trade in slaves, and he will accept those means, and

the slave trade ends. Call out, then, the resources of the country itself ; establish a legitimate commerce for the disposal of her natural products. The fertile soil of Africa is your ally. The antagonist which is alone able to cope with the slave trade is legitimate commerce ; and this commerce will spring up as soon as the natural products of the country can be brought to market, and the exchange established between these and the supplies which the African needs.

In the second part of his book, his object is to prove that the remedy he proposes can be applied.

“ He established the fact, first, that gold, iron, and copper abound in many districts of the country ; secondly, that vast regions are of the most fertile description, and are capable of producing rice, wheat, hemp, indigo, coffee, &c., and, above all, the sugar cane and cotton, in any quantities ; while the forests contain every kind of timber,— mahogany, ebony, dye-woods, the oil-palm, &c. ; besides caoutchouc and other gums. He also proved that the natives, so far from shunning intercourse with us, have been in every case eager and importunate that we should settle among them.”

“ While the capabilities of Africa are thus extensive, the facilities for commercial intercourse are on the same scale. He mentioned those afforded by the great rivers on the west coast of Africa, especially the Niger, which had been explored by Lander to the distance of 500 miles from the sea, and the Tchadda, which runs into it : and he dwelt much on the singular fitness of the situation of Fernando Po, as an emporium of commerce. He emphatically declared his conviction, that Central Africa possesses within itself every thing necessary for the growth of commerce ; and he proceeded to point out, in confirmation of this statement, that in certain spots on the west coast of Africa, where some degree of security had been afforded, agriculture and commerce had as a consequence immediately sprung up, and the slave trade had withered away. He derived his facts from authorities of the most varied and impartial description, including extracts from the authors most conversant with Africa ; from the writings of the Governors of Sierra Leone, Fernando Po, and the Gambia ; from those of all the travellers who had explored western Africa ; and from those of African merchants, scientific men, and others, who had studied the subject at home.” pp. 450, 451.

The argument closes with a plan of action.

“ The following were some of the specific steps suggested by him for turning the attention of the Africans from their trade in men to the trade in merchandise :— That the British Government

should increase the preventive squadron on the coast — should purchase Fernando Po, as a kind of head-quarters and mart of commerce — should give protection to private enterprises — and should enter into treaty with the native chiefs, for the relinquishment of the slave trade, for grants of lands to be brought into cultivation, and for arrangements to facilitate a legitimate trade.

“ He proposed that an expedition should be sent up the Niger, for the purpose of setting on foot the preliminary arrangements in Africa for the agricultural, commercial, and missionary settlements ; of entering into treaties with the native chiefs ; of convincing the negroes of the uprightness of our intentions ; and of ascertaining the state of the country along that vast tract of land which is traversed by the river Niger.

“ A company was also to be formed, by private individuals, for the introduction of agriculture and commerce into Africa. This was to be effected by sending out qualified agents to form settlements in favorable situations ; to establish model farms ; to set up factories, well stored with British goods, and thus to sow the first seeds of commerce ; and, in short, to adopt those means, which have been elsewhere effectual, in promoting trade and the cultivation of the soil. He admitted entirely that this company must not expect speedy returns, although he strongly maintained the reasonable prospect of eventual profit.

“ Upon private individuals, also, would devolve the responsibility of coöoperating with the religious societies in sending out a strong force of those upon whom he especially depended for the deliverance of Africa, missionaries and native teachers.

“ He dwelt much upon the importance of making use of native agency for this purpose.” pp. 451, 452.

To complete this work by the appointed time he labored excessively. To Mrs. Buxton, who was in Florence for her health, he writes :—

“ I have been working hard during the week, but yesterday we had our hardest day. With the exception of a few minutes in the garden, and a run to the cottage and dinner, I did not stop from breakfast to half-past one o'clock at night ; and, what is more extraordinary, I had seven capital secretaries at work, and many of them during the whole day. We got on famously ; till then I had been very doubtful whether I should not be obliged to stay a week longer.” pp. 465.

His exertions were not without effect. Government determined to adopt his proposals, to send an expedition to the river Niger, to explore that river, and, if possible, to set on

foot commercial relations with the people inhabiting its banks. Sir Edward Parry, being directed to prepare three vessels, decided that they must be built for the purpose ; and during the necessary interval, Mr. Buxton took the opportunity to join his family in Rome. Before he went, a society was founded under the title of “The Society for the Suppression of the Slave Trade, and the Civilization of Africa,” in which the Bishop of London, Lord Ashley, Sir Robert Inglis, Sir Thomas Acland, and other distinguished individuals took an active part.

In the spring of 1840, Mr. Buxton returned to England full of impatience to resume his labors. The work of preparing the three iron steamers for the expedition was going on. On the 1st of June, a meeting of those interested in the project was held at Exeter Hall, Prince Albert presiding, and was attended by a large and enthusiastic company.

“ Shortly after this meeting of the African Civilization Society, it was intimated to Mr. Buxton, by Lord John Russell, that it was proposed to confer the rank of Baronet upon him. After some deliberation, having ascertained that the idea had not been suggested to the Government by any of his friends, but was a spontaneous mark of their approbation of his conduct, he accepted the title with much gratification.” pp. 524, 525.

On the 14th of April, 1841, the Niger expedition sailed. Arriving at the mouth of the Niger in the month of August, that being the season recommended by those acquainted with the subject, the three steamers, the Soudan, the Albert, and the Wilberforce passed up the stream on the 20th of the month. At first, all went well. “ Every one was in the highest spirits, cheered by the novelty and beauty of the scenery, and by the exhilarating feeling of the air, which appeared perfectly salubrious.” But on the 4th of September, a fever of the most malignant character broke out on board the Albert, and almost simultaneously in the other vessels. They proceeded, notwithstanding ; but soon the sickness increased with such appalling rapidity, that Captain Trotter, commander of the expedition, thought it advisable to send the sick down the river in the Soudan, under the command of a Lieutenant. At the mouth of the river they met the steamer Dolphin, which relieved them, and took them to Fernando Po. But the sickness on board the Albert and the

Wilberforce still continued ; and on the 21st of September, the Wilberforce was sent down stream, while Captains Trotter and Bird Allen pushed forward in the Albert. They kept on till the 4th of October, as far as Egga, 320 miles from the sea.

" But the sickness on board had become so very alarming, that it was found absolutely necessary, on the 4th of October, to steam down the river with all speed. Captain Bird Allen, who had been most anxious to persevere, and in fact almost all the officers and men on board, except the negroes, were seized with the deadly fever. Captain Trotter himself was at length disabled by it ; and at this critical period the engineers also were too ill to perform their duty ! Dr. Stanger (the geologist,) however, having learned how to manage the engines, from a scientific treatise on board, undertook to work them himself ; and Dr. MacWilliam in addition to his laborious duties in attending the sick, conducted the ship down the river, with the assistance of only one white sailor, 'in the most able, and judicious manner.' " p. 557.

" While the Albert was still a hundred miles from the sea, its disabled crew were surprised and delighted by seeing a steamer coming up the stream towards them. It proved to be the Ethiope, commanded by Captain Becroft, who had been directed by Mr. Jamieson to afford every assistance to the expedition. This timely assistance was of the greatest importance. Captain Becroft and his engineer took charge of the Albert, and brought her in safety to Fernando Po. It was hoped that Captain Bird Allen and his gallant fellow sufferers would rapidly revive under the influence of its purer air ; but many were already too much sunk to receive benefit, and the mortality was most painful. Of the 301 persons who composed the expedition, when it commenced the ascent of the Niger, forty-one perished from the African fever. It may be worth while to observe, that of the 108 Africans on board not one died from the effects of the disease. Captain Bird Allen fell a victim to it at Fernando Po, on the 21st of October." pp. 558, 559.

Thus failed the Niger expedition, defeated by obstacles which no degree of skill or courage could avoid or overcome. It may be imagined what anguish this melancholy prostration of his hopes wrung from the brave heart of Sir Fowell Buxton. His health, seriously impaired before, became more feeble now that failure in his most earnest purpose threw its shadow upon him. The clouds were gathering around his setting sun. " After the failure of the African expedition," writes one of his friends, " he was but the ghost of himself.

I do not say, as was recorded of a distinguished person after a great calamity, that he never smiled again ; but it was evident to all, and I think, at all times, that a great storm had broken over him." "And yet," says his son, "the three years which elapsed between the failure of the Niger expedition and his death were brightened by not a few gleams of domestic happiness, by many country pleasures ; by the great satisfaction of receiving in the main good tidings of the working of emancipation in the West Indies ; by some encouragements about Africa, but above all, by the exercise of faith and the consolations of religion."

There was one feature of the case upon which he looked with hope. It was observed, that none of the Africans who accompanied the expedition were affected by the climate. "Our exertions," he writes, "have *not* been wholly useless. At all events, we know one thing which we did not know before. We know how the evil is to be cured ; that it is to be done by native agency. *Africa is to be delivered by her own sons.*" If this idea be just, is there any land from which that deliverance can come so well as from our own ?

Sir Fowell Buxton died at Northrepp's Hall, on the 19th of February, 1845, in the fifty-ninth year of his age. A character of such simplicity and strength, and a life so thoroughly governed by principle as his, afford but little occasion for disquisition or remark. His epitaph is written in his works. They best display his "plain, heroic magnitude of mind."

A few weeks after his death, it was proposed to erect a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey. Prince Albert was the first subscriber ; but after his, the sum of each subscription was limited to two guineas. A list of many distinguished names was quickly formed ; and when the project came to the knowledge of those whose welfare he had labored to promote, of the negroes in the West Indies, Sierra Leone, and Cape Town, and the natives of Caffraria, they eagerly came forward to add their testimonials of gratitude to these of respect. Four hundred and fifty pounds, chiefly in pence and half-pence, were contributed by upwards of 50,000 persons.

In the north transept of Westminster Abbey lie buried the statesmen of the British realm. There lie the earthly relics of the two Pitts, of Lord Mansfield, Grattan, Fox, Canning,

Wilberforce, and there stands the statue of Sir Fowell Buxton. One by one, escorted by the dignitaries of the land, by the Houses of Parliament, by the nobles and princes of the realm, have they received the last and most lasting honor in the power of their countrymen to bestow. The funeral rites are over; the stately procession has passed mournfully away; the heavy stones are replaced upon the tomb, and the heartless servitors are gone. No sound breaks the silence that reigns in this sanctuary of a nation's glory, this temple of a people's faith. In such a place, amid such silence and alone, let him, who would rightly judge, compare the merits of those who repose around him. The orator, the politician, the wit, the debater, the statesman, what rank do they hold when compared with those who devoted their lives and their strength to "redeem man from slavery, superstition, and crime."

ART. II. The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, prior to the Union with New Haven Colony, May, 1665; transcribed and published, in Accordance with a Resolution of the General Assembly, under the Supervision of the Secretary of State, with Occasional Notes and an Appendix. By J. HAMMOND TRUMBULL, Cor. Sec. Conn. Hist. Society, &c. Hartford : Brown & Parsons, 1850. 8vo. pp. 604.

HERE is another contribution, and a valuable one, to the accessible sources of the history of New England. The ancient records of the good old Colony of Connecticut, carefully transcribed from the already mouldering pages of the original, are in this handsome volume preserved from all future chances of destruction by decay or fire. Their publication is at once an office of piety, the erection of a monument to those whose memory ought to live forever in the commonwealth which they founded, and a service for which the future student of history will be grateful. It is the most appropriate and truthful eulogy that could be inscribed on the tombstones of the sleeping fathers of Connecticut. Monumental inscriptions, properly so called, are remarkable for any thing but